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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2006

A QUICK LOOK AT THE TURKISH PRESS
February 6, 2006

In Today's Papers

Reaction Grows Against Cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed
All papers: Muslims around the world continued demonstrations to protest against the publishing of cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed. Demonstrators set fire to the Danish and Norwegian Embassies in Damascus and Danish Consulate in Beirut. In an effort to reduce tensions over the issue, Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul launched an initiative to bring the Islamic world and European countries together in a common forum for dialogue. Turkish Embassies in Europe will convey this call to the relevant countries. Meanwhile, protests in Turkey against the cartoons is also growing. Small-scale (less than 1,000) demonstrations were held in Ankara, Izmir, Sivas, Batman, Sirnak, and Istanbul, where about 700 demonstrators threw eggs at the Danish Consulate. The Danish editor of the paper that initially published the cartoons has again refused to apologize, saying that 'cartoons of Jesus in a very unfavorable light were published by Turkish papers in the past.' Prime Minister Erdogan criticized the violence, saying that 'the publication of these cartoons was wrong, but burning and destroying is just as wrong. This issue can only be resolved at the table.' PM Erdogan and Spanish PM Zapatero published a joint letter in today's International Herald Tribune calling for calm and moderation.

Commenting on the issue, Yilmaz Oztuna wrote in the conservative *Turkiye*: "It was very important and pleasing to see the reactions from western world, from the Pope to the US president and the German PM, who made a distinction between insulting sacred values and freedom of expression. The remedy is mutual tolerance and empathy. Otherwise, we

will be led to a war based on religion, which the international community cannot possibly bear."

Yasemin Congar reported from Washington in the mainstream Milliyet: "Muslims in North America have showed a relatively calm reaction against the cartoons published in the European dailies. They must have been thinking about what the Prophet Mohammad would do."

Erdal Safak observed in the mass appeal Sabah "The cartoon crisis has indeed helped the despotic regimes of the Middle East. This is clearly seen if you take a close look at the events in Syria and Lebanon. All of this indicates the importance of secularism more than ever before."

Fehmi Kuru observed in the Islamist opinion maker Yeni Safak: "This is a campaign intended to elicit a backlash from the Islamic world. This is a disgusting and demonic ploy. Remaining silent and copping out in the face of this insult or taking to the streets and engaging in riots will make the project successful. Are we going to fall into this trap?"

Catholic Priest Murdered in Trabzon
Milliyet, Vatan, Posta, Sabah, Hurriyet and others: An Italian priest at the Roman Catholic Church in the northeastern port city of Trabzon was shot dead at the door of his Church by a young man yesterday afternoon. Some papers are connecting the murder with protests against cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed published in European papers. He killing of the priest is referred to as a `huge

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provocation.' Turkish government spokesman Minister Cicek said 'the government is deeply sorry about the assault. Such acts cannot be considered legitimate, no matter what the reason and who the perpetrators are.' The investigation into the murder continues, but there have been no arrests.

Iran Ends Cooperation with IAEA
All papers: Iranian Foreign Minister Mottaki announced on Sunday that Iran had ended all voluntary cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) because of the IAEA decision to refer Iran to the UN Security Council over its nuclear program. The announcement means that Iran will no longer allow IAEA inspectors to its nuclear facilities.

Secretary Rice Postpones Visit to Turkey

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Vatan, Hurriyet: The visit of Secretary Rice to Turkey, which was expected to take place in February, has reportedly been postponed until the spring. According to Vatan, the visit has been postponed because of the Iran issue and the recent release of the the Turkish movie 'Valley of the Wolves-Iraq,' which depicts alleged atrocities by US forces in Iraq.

Diyarbakir Mayor Baydemir's Visit to the US:
Sabah(2/5), Hurriyet, Vatan, The New Anatolian: Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir's visit to the US has caused some controversy in diplomatic circles. According to a US Embassy spokesman, Baydemir is not visiting the US as the official guest of the US Government, but is participating at a conference on municipal administration. Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul warned Baydemir against `political shows' and urged him to concentrate on his primary duties as mayor - addressing the needs of the people of Diyarbakir. The US Embassy spokesman denied reports that Mayor Baydemir will be hosted at `high levels' by the US State Department.

TV HIGHLIGHTS
NTV News (0700)

Focus on Turkey

- The Italian priest at a Catholic church in Trabzon was killed by an unknown gunman. Government ministers strongly condemn the attack, and efforts continue to find the perpetrator.
- Scenes of protest from around Turkey as anger grows over the publication of cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad. Nationalists headed a demonstration of several hundred in Istanbul, hurling eggs at the Danish Consulate.
- AKP parliamentarian Faruk Celik was shot and wounded in Bursa. The wound is not serious, and the motive for the attack does not appear to be political.

Focus on the United States

Protesters demonstrated in Washington, calling for President Bush to resign. The protesters are shown burning an American flag, as a commentator describes the 'continued plunge' in popular support for President Bush.

US Republican Senator Arlen Specter said that wiretapping of American citizens without a court order is 'a violation of the law,' thereby escalating the 'eavesdropping scandal' for the Bush Administration.

WILSON